



CHRS

Capitol Hill Restoration Society

News

May 2024

The House & Garden Tour is Here!

By Fynnette Eaton, Jackie Krieger and Angie Schmidt

Come join us at the 2024 House & Garden Tour, May 11–12! We are featuring nine fascinating homes, two historic places of community worship/gathering, and the Hill Center. This year's tour footprint is 13th Street NE to the east, 5th Street SE to the west, Massachusetts Avenue NE to the north and Pennsylvania Avenue to the south.

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There are several stops on just one street in this year's tour, including Capitol Hill Baptist Church at 525 A Street NE (top right); 802 A Street NE (right), and 813 A Street NE (above).



IMAGES COURTESY JACKIE KRIEGER AND LIBBY QUARD



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Election for 2024–2025 CHRS Board of Directors

By Beth Purcell

The Elections Committee recommendations for the 2024–2025 Board of Directors have been approved by the current Board of Directors. Ballots will be mailed to all CHRS members who are on the rolls as of May 1, 2024. Once distributed, ballots must be completed and returned within two weeks. The results of the election will be announced at the June Membership Meeting, if the meeting can be held, and in the July/August newsletter. If the Membership Meeting must be postponed, the membership will be notified by email as soon as the results can be tabulated.



Angie Schmidt has been re-nominated to serve as President. Angie Schmidt moved with her family

from northwest DC to the circa-1881 house on Capitol Hill in 2002. Her career began in editing and publishing and she currently works part-time handling the books for two small businesses. She started volunteering with CHRS in 2016, serving as an editor for the *CHRS News*, which she continues to edit. In her second term, she continued to push for the use of Eventbrite to be able to gain metrics on CHRS activities and outreach; presented numerous walking tours; encouraged the use of social media to attract new members; worked on outreach to other civic organization and to the DC government; and served as one of the three 2023 and 2024 House & Garden Tour managers.



Fynnette Eaton has been nominated to serve as First Vice-President. She has served as one of the three 2023 and

2024 House & Garden Tour managers and was an At-Large Director. She and her husband, James Miller, both grew up in the suburbs of DC and moved to Capitol Hill in 1976. She worked for the Smithsonian Institution and the National Archives and Records Administration as an archivist focused on electronic records. Since retiring from Federal service, she has focused on records management issues and is currently employed by Savan Group. She served as a docent on the House Tour for many years and became a member of the House Tour Committee in 2019. She researched the Notable People walking tour and has helped out with many others. She has been a student of dance for many years with the St. Mark's Dance Studio for many years.



Tina May has been re-nominated to serve as Second Vice-President. Tina May moved to Capitol Hill in

1982 for an affordably-priced rental house with college friends and has lived here ever since. Soon thereafter, she and her husband Peter bought their first house in need of restoration. They did most of the work on that house, and then a second, and are now working on their third and most challenging project. In the meantime, three sons grew up and moved out, while lending a hand. Tina works in concert production.



Nick Alberti has been re-nominated for Treasurer. He moved to Capitol Hill in 1985 with his wife, Elizabeth

Nelson. They were attracted to the charming architecture of the Hill and are grateful to have found a home in the Historic District. Nick retired from a career as a statistician with the Census Bureau in 2010. He served as a commissioner in ANC 6A where he was initially the Treasurer and later the Chair. He was appointed to the DC Alcohol Beverage Control Board in 2008, serving eleven years. He is currently a member of the Capitol Hill Village Endowment Board, the CHRS Endowment Committee, the CHRS Zoning Committee and the ANC 6A committees providing advice on zoning and alcohol beverage licensing.



Libby Quaid has been re-nominated for Secretary. She moved to Capitol Hill in 2000 and bought her 1890s

home with her husband in 2002. She worked as a journalist for The Associated Press for 24 years and still consults as an analyst to help call races in election years. Today she teaches for Mister Mike's Music, a Capitol Hill-based center that offers music classes to families with babies and toddlers. Libby has been working to bring old-house character back to her home, which was mostly gutted in a 1970s renovation. She likes researching buildings on the Hill, especially through newspaper archives, and deeply respects old buildings that

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Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President Angie Schmidt
 First Vice President Christine Mullins
 Second Vice President Tina May
 Treasurer Nick Alberti
 Secretary Libby Quaid
 At Large Fynnette Eaton
 At Large Delancey Gustin
 At Large Beth Hague
 At Large Jackie Krieger
 At Large Gary Peterson
 At Large Jim Thackaberry
 Immediate Past President Beth Purcell

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Budget & Administration* Nick Alberti
 City Planning* Monte Edwards
 Communications* Marci Hilt
 Community Development* Chuck Burger
 Community Relations Elizabeth Nelson
 Environment* Joanna Kendig
 Grants Larry Pearl
 Historic Preservation* Beth Purcell
 House Tour Eaton, Krieger & Schmidt
 Investments John Shages
 Membership* Maygene Daniels
 Public Safety* Undine Nash
 Public Space Steve Kehoe
 Zoning* Nick Alberti

* Chair is an appointed Board Member

NEWSLETTER

Angie Schmidt and Kelly Vielmo, Editors

WEBMASTER

Elizabeth Nelson

OFFICE MANAGER

Jill Uvena Cullinane

To reach any of the above, please contact the CHRS office at (202) 543-0425 or via e-mail at: caphrs420@gmail.com.

ABOUT CHRS

The Capitol Hill Restoration Society is a nonprofit, volunteer organization devoted to protecting, preserving, and celebrating our historic Capitol Hill neighborhood.

Founded in 1955, CHRS is a pioneer in the urban preservation movement. CHRS was instrumental in securing Capitol Hill's designation in 1976 as a national historic district. Since then, CHRS has worked continuously to protect historic spaces and to enhance life on the Hill.

CHRS is driven by members who love their neighborhood and want to preserve and share the dynamic story of Capitol Hill for future generations. Come join us!

Learn more and join at chrs.org

Zoning Report

By Nick Alberti

On April 2, 2024, four members of the CHRS Zoning Committee met to discuss five cases. One representative participated to present their proposal. The Committee voted to support four cases and oppose one.

BZA #21034 and ZC 23-23, 261 17th Street SE. The Committee voted to support the applicant's request to the DC Zoning Commission (ZC) for a map amendment to rezone Lot 802, Square 1088 (262 17th Street SE) from RF-1 to RF-2.

The applicant is proposing to redevelop the building at 262 17th Street SE (the former Eastern Branch Boy's and Girl's Club) into a 34-unit building with a penthouse addition. All planned units would be affordable housing units. The rezoning is necessary to facilitate those plans. The building which has been owned by DC government will be difficult to develop due to its current architecture and condition. It has sat vacant for many years. The Committee supports the proposed use of the building.

A hearing on a Board of Zoning Administration (BZA) application for zoning relief from floor area requirements and parking entrance accessibility requirements has been postponed until the Zoning Commission has ruled on the map amendment.

The Zoning Commission hearing on the map amendment is currently scheduled for April 24, 2024.

BZA #21057, 622 I (Eye) Street NE. The Committee voted to support (4-0) the applicant's appeal of the Department of Buildings (DOB) Zoning Administrator Kathleen Beeton's October 19, 2023 decision to issue permit B2303493. The permit would allow for the construction of a three unit residential building spanning two record lots, one of which is an alley lot, at 622 I (Eye) Street NE (Square 857, lots 32 and 113) in an RF-1 zone. The portion of the building occupying the alley lot would house two residential units. The two lots have not been combined

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Swampoodle Grants Come to an End

It is bittersweet for us to report that the Swampoodle Grant Program has come to a conclusion after nine years. All of the funds have been distributed and we are glad that so many homeowners in the second-newest extension of the Capitol Hill Historic District, the "Swampoodle addition"—so called because it incorporates part of the old section of the city defined by the swampy tributaries of the now embounded Tiber Creek—were able to receive CHRS-administered grants to defray their restoration and energy upgrade costs.

CHRS is grateful to Patrick Lally and Larry Pearl for their steady stewardship of this grant program. It was in very good hands and has made a real difference in the neighborhood. For more information on this program, see the September 2023 issue of CHRS News.

will endure for generations beyond our own. For CHRS, she's been volunteering on the Communications Committee and creating content to help boost followers and engagement on Instagram. She has a preteen daughter and a terrier mix, and both of them enjoy the dog paradise that is Capitol Hill.

Two At-Large Directors have also been re-nominated:



Beth Hague has been re-nominated as an At-Large Director for two years. She has a lifelong

appreciation of historic buildings, preservation, and community, which led her to fall in love with Capitol Hill when she arrived in Washington, DC. Turning to CHRS and the city for expertise, and inspired by community involvement in land use planning, Beth was heavily involved in the successful effort to establish the Emerald Street Historic District, where she has lived since 2002. Beth serves on the CHRS Board and Zoning Committee. During the week, Beth works at the Department of State. In her free time, she enjoys walking through Hill neighborhoods, singing

with the Capitol Hill Chorale, attending Chiarina concerts, or hiking with her family in Maine.



Jackie Krieger has been re-nominated as an At-Large Director for two years. She moved to the

Washington, DC area over 40 years ago. Landing on Capitol Hill, she immediately fell in love with the area's history, architecture, and community spirit and never left. Jackie retired from a career at the Environmental Protection Agency, working primarily in the areas of climate change and pollution prevention. She has served as one of the three 2023 and 2024 House & Garden Tour managers and is a member of the CHRS Zoning Committee. Jackie currently lives just off Lincoln Park. She enjoys working in her garden, studying the Italian language, and walking with her dog Lucky around the neighborhood.

Two new At-Large Directors have been nominated:



David Pelizzari has been nominated as an At-Large Director for two years. He moved into the house on

C Street NE that he still calls home in 1997 and became a CHRS member in 2002. Originally a working farm boy in Traverse City, Michigan—cherries!—he came to DC after a first post-farm career as a Shakespeare specialist in France, Canada, and New York City. Once in DC, he served as Communications Director for Annenberg/CPB and later in similar positions with the Smithsonian and the Library of Congress. He

now works as a rare book specialist consulting for private collectors. Having grown up among orchards and barns means he loves trees and historical buildings, so Capitol Hill has been a good fit.



Matt Handverger has been nominated as an At-Large Director for two years. He is excited to be nominated for

this position on the board. He first fell in love with Capitol Hill in 2012 when he rented a townhouse with friends. In 2021, Matt and his wife bought the 150+ year old house she grew up in. While a professional communicator on the Hill by day, Matt spends his free time repairing and restoring their house in a way that embraces its history and quirks.

Christine Mullins and Delancey Gustin made important contributions to CHRS; they have decided not to run for re-election. We appreciate their service. ★

**Enjoying this newsletter?
Please consider joining CHRS!**

Annual membership is only \$35 and includes the newsletter, a set of historic guidelines, and early access to events, including our annual House and Garden



Tour. Scan this QR code or visit chrs.org for more information.

The Story of Electricity, Power, and Light on Capitol Hill

By Christine Mullins

On March 26, Joanna Kendig, a local historian and CHRS board member, treated Capitol Hill residents to an overview of the systems development and evolution of the electric services we often take for granted in our homes. It seems we only recently discovered how to harness electricity to serve humanity during the 19th century.

Kendig explored the private electrical enterprises that emerged in Washington during the late 1800s to serve our growing city. Companies, such as the Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPCO), U.S. Electric Lighting Company, Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company, and Columbia Light and Power Company, expanded, merged, and consolidated as they created an electric distribution system to power our street lights and run our streetcars. Kendig continued into the 20th century as PEPCO, our utility company, built power plants and substations across the city.

Electricity was first installed to light the city's main street arteries in 1882. Washington ran its first electric trolley in 1888. An electric generator was installed in the White House basement in 1891.

The electric system was initially built to serve commercial uses—16 percent of businesses had electricity by 1913. Next came the drive to light residential homes. Kendig found a 1906 newspaper advertisement in which PEPCO extolled the benefits of using electricity to light your house—it will “save you steps, preserve your temper, and give you endless comfort,” eliminating the need to hunt for matches.

Over the next decades, the city's row houses gradually traded gas lights for electric light bulbs and

coal stoves for electric ranges in wealthier areas. Manufacturers responded in kind by providing an increasing variety of small and large appliances that would become cheaper, larger, and more energy efficient.

PEPCO initially sold electric appliances directly to the consumer. The company established a home services department in 1925 and sent home economists to customer's homes to demonstrate the possibilities—refrigerators, toasters, irons, vacuum cleaners, and washing machines.

Kendig jumped forward to the 21st century as Washington's expanded electric grid and infrastructure continued to evolve. Fortunately, for Washingtonians a good deal of this infrastructure is underground.

In 2018, the District passed the Clean Energy DC Omnibus Amendment Act which mandated we move away from fossil fuels to run 100 percent on clean energy by 2032. Interestingly, this has prompted many parts of our city to return to local centers of power generation.

For example, the Blue Plains Wastewater Treatment Plant is harvesting methane from human waste, Brentwood Reservoir captures solar energy with a large array of solar panels, and the Capitol Power Plant provides steam and chilled water to heat and cool buildings throughout the U.S. Capitol campus. Many residents have installed solar panels on the roofs of their houses to create individual power stations!



An historic view of the Capitol Power Plant.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

The city is slowly making and realizing plans to repurpose the remnants of the old power plants and substations throughout Capitol Hill—into residential units, restaurants, and mixed-use facilities. Examples include the PEPCO substations at 7th Street SE and 8th Street NW, Navy Yard Central Power, the Buzzard Point Power Plant and substation, and Building 170, a beautiful old spacious brick building many of us pass as we walk to Nats Stadium. The possibilities seem endless!

For more details, insight, city-wide maps, and photos, we encourage you to access the recorded presentation link at: chrs.org/powerlight-pc/#more-14931. ★

CHRS Preservation Cafés are free to CHRS members and non-members.

Upcoming Preservation Café

100 Years of Eastern High School
Jen Harris and Erin Roth
Tuesday, May 28 at 6:30 pm

Virtual presentation; details at:
chrs.org/easternhs100-pc.

House Tour, *continued from cover*

All tickets are available now through Eventbrite—members should have received their promo codes for discounts (please contact our office if you have not received yours). **Tickets sold out in 2023**—please buy yours in advance! Ticket holders will receive an email before the weekend with a map of check-in locations where you receive your wristband and brochure—we have

four check-in locations to help keep things moving smoothly.

The Hill Center will act as headquarters for the event. If you need to purchase tickets by cash or check or have any questions, there will be a Help Desk during Tour hours: Saturday, 4–7 pm and Sunday, 1–5 pm. The Hill Center will also hold architectural building tours both days at 3 pm. And be sure to stop in

for treats from Captain Cookie! and samples from the Capital Candy Jar.

Please join us for this fun community event! All proceeds from the Tour fund CHRS's activities in preservation, planning and education such as walking tours, preservation cafes and community forums. ★

Zoning Report, *continued from page 3*

into one lot despite plans for the multi-unit building to span both lots.

The appeal was made by the Administrative Neighborhood Committee (ANC) 6C. The elements underlying the basis for the appeal are several: 1) construction of more than one residential unit on an alley lot is not permitted; 2) the construction of a building covering more than one record lot is not allowed and 3) the proposed multi-unit building lacks the required street frontage. The Committee supports all three elements of the appeal.

The BZA hearing is currently scheduled for May 1, 2024.

BZA #21093, 138 E Street SE. The Committee voted to support (4-0) the applicant's request for zoning relief to construct a second story addition to an existing accessory garage in the RF-1 zone. The lot occupancy at 70.2% is currently non-conforming. The footprint of the accessory garage would not change with the addition of a second story. The Committee concluded that the addition would have no significant impact on the neighbors' light and air.

The BZA hearing is currently scheduled for April 24, 2024.

BZA 21094, 235 10th Street NE. The Committee voted to support (4-0) the applicant's request for a special exception zoning relief to construct a two-story rear addition to an existing three story single family row dwelling in the RF-1 zone. The lot occupancy will increase from 53% to 67%.

The Committee concluded that the addition would have no significant impact on the neighbors' light or air.

The BZA hearing is currently scheduled for April 24, 2024.

BZA #21098, 633 E Street Rear SE. The Committee voted to oppose (4-0) the applicants request for a variance zoning relief to construct a second story addition to an existing, semi-detached alley building in a RF-1 zone. The owner proposes to construct a second story to former commercial alley building and convert it to a principal dwelling unit. The proposed height of the building would be 28 feet. The proposed height is 6 feet beyond the matter-of-right alley lot height limit of 22 feet.

The Committee concluded that the request does not meet the standards for variance relief, i.e., that strict application of the zoning regulations

would result in exceptional practical difficulties or undue hardship for the owner. The building which occupies almost the entire lot and is more than 5,500 sq. ft. could practically be converted to a valuable residential unit without the addition of a second story. There are similar one-story former commercial alley buildings on Capitol Hill (of similar size) that have been successfully converted to highly valuable residential units.

The BZA hearing is currently scheduled for April 24, 2024. ★

Lively Discussion with DGS at Membership Meeting

By Angie Schmidt

Delano Hunter, the Director of the Department of General Services (DGS), was the featured speaker at the Spring Membership Meeting and Community Forum on April 3 at the Hill Center. The talk was preceded by an organizational CHRS business meeting and followed by a reception.

DGS is responsible for the maintenance of such things as the Metro Plaza, Eastern Market and local public schools. Director Hunter led a lively question and answer session after his presentation, since so many community members had questions about these important community

resources. The informative slides are available at chrs.org.

And mark your calendar for the Summer Membership Meeting, where we will announce the election results and have another special guest—Steve Callcott, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer from the DC Office of Planning. He will give a presentation and answer your historic preservation questions. A reception will follow. This will be held at the Hill Center on Monday, June 17 at 6:30 pm. ★



DGS Director Delano Hunter at the CHRS Spring Membership Meeting on April 3.

Thank You, CHRS Supporters!

CHRS wishes to thank the following donors for their invaluable support:

MEMBERSHIPS

Individual

Elizabeth Barnett
Cara Camacho
Edward Coltman
Howard Gantman
Roberta Gutman
Suzanne Hazard
Alex H. Howle
Patti Martin
Henry Maury
Judith V. May
Scott Roberts
Andrew Cliffe Robison
Peter Rothschild
Laura Salarano
Brenda Sanchez
Marta Wagner
Elaine Wine

Household

John Edwards & Paul Albergo
Hilary & Mike Benson
Carl Ford & Melissa Chow
Kira Ayish & Jeff Edmonds
Rose Jenkins & Daniel Horner
Rosemary Harold & Michael Knipe
Carrie McDougall & John Varesi
Nils Bruzelius & Lynne Weil

Bronze

Terry Allard
Janet Crowder, Two Lions
Dirk & Terry Debbink
Anne Loiret & Guillaume Deybach
Kevin Creighan & Cathy Hampton
Thea Kreis
Undine & Carl Nash
Betsy Rutkowski

Silver

R. Mark Scowcroft
Deanne Seward

Gold

Etta Fielek
David & Shauna Holmes



Capitol Hill Restoration Society

420 10th Street SE
Washington, DC 20003

chrs.org

Mark Your Calendar!

Please check chrs.org for current information—cancellations or postponements will be posted as they are known.



Capitol Hill Restoration Society

MAY

1 Wednesday, 7 pm
Zoning Committee Meeting,
420 10th Street SE.

6 Monday, 6:30 pm
Historic Preservation Committee meeting,
420 10th Street SE.

67th Annual CHRS House & Garden Tour

Saturday, May 11, 4–7 pm &
Sunday, May 12, 1–5 pm

Tickets on sale now! More information at:
chrs.org/mothers-day-house-garden-tour.

15 Wednesday, 6 pm
Board meeting, Northeast Library,
330 7th Street NE.

28 Tuesday, 6:30 pm
Preservation Café: “100 Years of Eastern
High School.” Virtual presentation. Details:
chrs.org/easternhs100-pc.

JUNE

1 Saturday & **2** Sunday,
10:30 am and 1 pm
Alley-focused walking tours by CHRS
volunteer tour guides. Go to eventbrite.com
or chrs.org for more details.

3 Monday, 6:30 pm
Historic Preservation Committee meeting,
420 10th Street SE.

5 Wednesday, 7 pm
Zoning Committee meeting,
420 10th Street SE.

17 Monday, 6:30 pm
Summer Membership Meeting with Deputy
HPO Steve Callcott, DC Office of Planning.
Hill Center, 921 Pennsylvania Avenue SE.

19 Wednesday, 6 pm
Board meeting, Northeast Library,
330 7th Street NE.

JULY

1 Monday, 6:30 pm
Historic Preservation Committee meeting,
420 10th Street SE.

3 Wednesday, 7 pm
Zoning Committee, 420 10th Street SE.

17 Wednesday, 6 pm
Board meeting, Northeast Library,
330 7th Street NE.

OCTOBER

26 Saturday, 9 am–3 pm
CHRS 2024 House Expo, Eastern Market
North Hall. Free. Details: chrs.org/house-expo-2024.